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**LATEST CRIME STATISTICS RELEASED**  
**- North Dakota Remains Safest State**  
**- Dramatic Increase in DUI Arrests**

BISMARCK – Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem today released North Dakota's crime statistics for 2004. The report is compiled from information provided to his office by local law enforcement agencies across the state. The report also shows statistical trends for the past decade.

"Even though violent crimes increased slightly in 2004, they remain at less than five percent of total crimes reported and North Dakota retains its status as the safest state in the nation," said Stenehjem.

The "violent crime" category includes murder, rape, robbery and assault. Violent crime comprised 4.4 percent of the total index offenses reported. The total number of violent crimes reported was 528, an increase of 5.8 percent from the 499 violent crimes reported in 2003, but fewer than the 553 reported in 2002.

Property crimes accounted for 95.6 percent of the total index offenses reported in 2004. The number of property crimes decreased 7.8 percent from the 2003 total of 12,516 to 11,545 in 2004. Over \$10.9 million dollars worth of property was reported stolen in 2004.

In 2004, 12,073 crime index offenses were reported by local law enforcement agencies, a 7.2 percent decrease from 2003. The total number of arrests reported dropped from 30,334 in 2003 to 29,372 in 2004. Approximately nine percent of total arrests were for "crime index" offenses, which include the violent crimes of murder/non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault, and the property crimes of burglary, theft and motor vehicle theft. Juveniles accounted for 41 percent of crime index offense arrests.

There were ten murders in 2004, six involving domestic violence. Of the ten murders, five victims died as a result of gunshot wounds. An analysis of the homicides for 1978-2004 shows that 51 percent of deaths involved domestic violence, and 52 percent resulted from firearms use. "Alcohol abuse also is a significant contributing factor in domestic violence incidents," said Stenehjem. "According to the North Dakota Council of Abused Women's Services, in more than 30% of domestic violence cases, the batterer had been drinking."

"The worst statistic reported in 2004 is total alcohol-related arrests, which increased by nearly twenty percent from 2003," said Stenehjem. Almost every demographic group shows an increase in arrests but the biggest increases are for the state's senior population. DUI arrests for the over-sixty population were up by 63%, and arrests of those aged 60-64 more than doubled, from 46 in 2003 to 93 last year. "DUI is a

completely preventable crime, and these are deplorable statistics,” continued Stenehjem.

Approximately 77 percent of all DUI arrests were males. Juveniles accounted for 1.6 percent of total DUI arrests in 2004.

Drug arrests increased 0.6 percent in 2004, from 2,045 in 2003 to 2,057. Juveniles accounted for 10.9 percent of drug arrests, down from the year before. The arrests for the drug category which includes meth have increased by 26.5 percent since 2003.

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